THE RELATION BETWEEN PIETY AND INTELLECTUAL LABOR.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

OPENING OF THE FOURTEENTH SESSION

OF

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ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN—

My object in this Address is to point out the connection betwixt a healthy piety and the cultivation of the intellect. In order to store the mind with knowledge, and invigorate and sharpen its powers, many things are found useful, while some should be regarded as indispensable. Professors in such an Institution as this, ought not only to communicate Science and Literature to their Students, but should also point out the various appliances which are auxiliary to intellectual improvement.

Bodily health is one of the most obvious, and not the least important of these. For, be it as it may, as to mental improvement in the conditions of being, it is plain, in our present mixed condition, this depends not a little on the health of the body. That blind enthusiasm for learning, which, in aiming at temporary triumphs, forgets this, is almost certain to fail in the higher attainments and more solid acquisitions of mind. The fruits of precocious attainment, gathered at the expense of a ruined constitution, cost far too high a price, and, on the whole, are seldom of much worth. We must beware of overlooking the relation which God has established betwixt body and mind. But, while the claims of health for intellectual growth, as well as for other purposes, must be held sacred, yet do not suppose that to indulge in sloth is to preserve health. Sloth is nearly as injurious to health of body, as it is to mental improvement. If ill-timed and excessive labor impairs our powers and faculties, by overworking them, sloth, by inaction, never fails to paralyze them. Experience furnishes a simple rule, viz.: that in order to secure the largest amount of intellectual labor, which shall on the whole be profitable, we must keep the body in the highest condition of health. Let no one, from thoughtlessness or an unwise ambition, forget this.

But a little reflection will show you, that there are other instrumentalities which, although not so immediate as bodily health, are, nevertheless, highly subservient to intellectual improvement.

The influence of natural scenery, although silent, and little observed, is yet very powerful in awakening those early feelings, and ideas, and peculiar turns of thought, from which the poet and orator, in the maturity of their powers, are enabled to draw many of their most striking images, and most powerful illustrations. When God is preparing minds that are to affect the future destinies of the world, it is wonderful to think in what seminaries he places them to receive, if not the finishing touches of their education, yet assuredly the elements of their most precious instruction. Not in Schools and Colleges alone, but in the soft glen, with its birds, flowers, and brooks, or on the mountain-top, with its rugged grandeur and wide-spreading wastes, or by the shore of the ocean with its own sublime music and wonders, does God place these young minds, that they may catch those primary ideas and nourish those incipient emotions, out of which they are afterwards, by the culture they receive from men, books, and reflection, to elaborate those views which are to be for the guidance and gratification of the world. Who can doubt that the young soul has caught up the germ of many a great conception while gazing with simple wonder on the starry heavens, or listening at night with awe to the noise of a waterfall, or looking in on the morning beauty of a mountain flower. In God's school there are many teachers, and many sorts of books, and blessed is he who has an ear to hear the simple and great lessons which they all announce for the improvement of man.

Nor for this purpose should that teaching be overlooked which is brought to bear on us in early life, from the influence of the social institutions under which we live.

It is easy to conceive of certain conditions of society, highly favorable for the acquisition of mere learning; yet, from a want of freedom of thought, or a constant pressure of an artificiality of sentiments and manners, may nevertheless be quite adverse to all robustness of mind, and all originality of thought and feeling. Luther would possibly have been very unfit, with all the learning he possessed, for fighting his great battle with Rome, had it not been for the peculiar training he received in his social position in early life. His was to be a great and a sore task; and God prepared him for it. But whatever is to be a man's work, it is well for him if he spends his early days among those who are distinguished for openness of soul, love of truth, good sense, warm affections, and rigorous attention to duty. Such communities are the true moral and intellectual nurseries of great minds. It is deeply to be regretted that the means which contribute most to produce a high order of intellect

among a people, are so grievously misunderstood, and so much overlooked. I cannot but think that this is done to a sad extent in our times. I can, however, at present, do no more than notice one of these—*A Healthy Piety.*

In speaking of the importance of piety to the growth of intellect and its efficient labors, I am quite aware that this is but relatively a low view of its importance to man. It is, nevertheless, a view deeply interesting, and, assuredly, not unsuitable for the place and occasion. True piety, as it awakens a thirst for the noblest kind of knowledge, cannot fail to produce a certain intellectual elevation even among the humblest in life. A pious people are acquainted with some of the loftiest and most deeply interesting of all truths. Their school learning may be very limited, yet you cannot speak of such a people as grossly ignorant. Indeed, no devout people, drawing their piety from the Bible, have ever been found deficient in good sense, strong sagacity, or sound views, on all practical subjects; nor have they ever been found indifferent to the increase of their stock of general knowledge. But, then, the piety of which this is predicated must be pure; the truths to which it directs faith of Divine origin; the motives from which it derives its activities must be such as God sanctions; and the passions which it awakens, must be all in accordance with the justice and benevolence of God, while His glory must ever be its grand end. A spurious piety, which is really a kind of impiety, must ever be feeble for good, and alone powerful for evil. Nor must it be overlooked that a spurious piety, as it is in its nature contrary to God, and leads to acts that are opposed to His government, must be hurtful to man, not only morally but intellectually. Spurious piety, when sincere, springs from great truths inverted. But an inverted truth not only becomes a fallacy, but a fallacy productive of mischievous practical errors. The danger in this case is peculiarly great, when it happens, as it often does, that after the substance of truth is lost, there remains a dim shadow to bewilder and mislead. This is the real secret, or rather the secret power of that fanaticism which has often corrupted the heart and conscience, and filled the world with anarchy and bloodshed. The hypocrite can afford to be bland, and the lukewarm forbearing, with their opinions; but he who is thoroughly influenced by inverted truths is the victim at once of the aberration and fury of a madman when his opinions are opposed. But, indeed, neither the hypocrite, formalist, or fanatic, can be said to have any true piety. Partly from sceptical malice, but oftener from a want of discrimination, men have uttered much fitted to produce confusion of ideas as to

what true piety has accomplished in earnest minds. Hence, some of the finest specimens of piety have been treated as fanatics, while some of the wildest fanatics have found apologists for their greatest follies and crimes. Justice forbids alike blind censure and unmerited commendation. The fear and love of the true God our Saviour must reign in the heart, ere men can cherish the sentiments of true piety, or produce its fruits. Religion may assume divers forms: in one order of minds it may take the form of abstract speculation: in another the form of some superstition that depends mainly on the senses and fancy: while in a third class of minds it may assume the form of fanaticism of awakened and malign passion. But without the knowledge of the true God, love to Him, and faith in Him through a Saviour, there can be no piety that will better and bless the heart of man. Hence the Bible is the book that unfolds true piety, while the Spirit of God is the invisible but efficient teacher of it to the human heart. When this heavenly piety is possessed, all is well with man for time and eternity: but although the influence of piety for eternity is incomparably the highest view we can take of it, yet my object at present is rather to direct your attention to its influence in improving and guiding your intellectual powers.

Everything great and good, whether a conception or a fact, must be viewed as coming from God. Now, as true piety brings the soul into an intelligible and loving union with the Divine mind, it cannot fail but yield to the mind many sentiments that are great, pure, and benevolent. All creatures partake of the bounty of God; but man alone can know Him as the Author of his being, his lawgiver, as well as his benefactor. God touches other creatures by His physical laws, but He speaks to the rational soul of man; and man, as a rational creature, can again speak to his Heavenly Father. This capacity for fellowship with God, constitutes our peculiar honor, and our chief happiness, as in it lies also our awful responsibility. There is an important sense in which all men may be said to see God—"for the invisible things of God are clearly seen by the things which are made;" yet it is only the eye of faith that can see Him in His moral glories and in His infinite loveliness. But this is really the view that pious souls have of God when they hold a near fellowship with the fountain of all excellence, and live, and move, amidst the greatest of Divine truths. Yet this does not in such minds make infinite objects little or base, but only awfully real, while it makes the distant near, the spiritual familiar, and at the same time gives simplicity to the complex, and great plainness of meaning to what would otherwise be

utterly inexplicable. The faith of the pious lifts up reason to a position where it rests, not in dull acquiescence amidst doubt and obscurity, but where it sweetly reposes with open eye on the clear and wondrous demonstrations which God has given of himself in the three grand developments—Creation, Moral Government, and Redemption. Of the last it is enough to say, that it is not only the fullest and grandest manifestation of God's perfections, but that without the views which it furnishes of these, very clear views of God in creation, and in His moral government, could, only by their splendor, overwhelm the sinner with amazement and terror. Sinners must see more than the omnipotency and justice of God, else He will be to them a consuming fire. But pious men can see what is great in God with reverential delight, when they see Him the Father of their Lord Jesus Christ; for they can then look to Him with confidence and hope, "as the Father of mercies and the God of all consolations."

Not that the perfections of the infinite God can be fully known. The wisest seraph comprehends these but imperfectly, and, assuredly, man can know but little of a Being of infinite excellence. Yet it is out of that little that is known that men must draw all their just and great sentiments, and all pure and noble emotions; for the Author of their being is also the Author of whatever of intellectual grandeur or moral beauty they possess. And although there is no comparison in degree betwixt the infinite perfections of God and the finite conceptions of creatures; yet there is such a moral relation, that the humble and believing contemplation of these perfections has the most blessed effect on our minds. Nor is it unworthy of notice, that where there is true piety, the mind is not lost in this contemplation, and *spiritual sympathy*, in mere vastness and indefinable grandeur, ending in an enfeebling mysticism; but all its views thence drawn are resolved into what is definite and practical. To illustrate this:—if you wish to attain to the most accurate and enlarged notions of justice, you will do this best by studying earnestly the justice of God: and if you would understand benevolence in its principles, and feel its influence in the most salutary way, you must study the love of God, and especially that love as seen in the Saviour dying for sinners. Society is held together by moral sentiments framed into laws; but if you would understand the force of these, and see clearly how they can be made to work most beneficially, you must study the perfections of God as seen in His moral government; *for the moral sentiments and laws among men are only wise and good just as far as they are in harmony with the*

Divine mind. Were this understood, and faithfully carried into practice, much in our world would undergo a most blessed change. With what clearness, beauty, and force, would legislators, statesmen and jurists, enact laws, and explain and apply them, did they take their first and highest lessons from the truth, wisdom, justice, and love of God. The truth of this is, to some extent, made apparent by reflecting that our greatest statesmen and lawyers have all been men who had studied under God. The rest, with all the noise they have made in the world, have been but expert politicians, clever pettifoggers, and subtle diplomatists. For whether we look at these truths which the perfections of God teach as abstract propositions, or as grand results unfolded in His moral providence, there can be no doubt that the enlightened and pious contemplation of them gives a truthfulness to our moral conceptions, and a singleness of aim to our motives, and purity of feeling in dealing with many questions, which the mind can never otherwise possess. For, assuredly, he who sees all things in God, or in the light that comes from Him, sees clearly the truth in things generally as well as the necessary relations among moral truths. This is, indeed, the highest form that reasoning can take, as it cannot fail under such light to arrive at certainty. No one need, therefore, wonder that those who have contributed most to our stock of juridical and political knowledge, and who have most successfully expounded moral and spiritual truth, should be found to have been men who held profound and just views on the perfections and government of God. Yes, it has ever been so, that they who from an awful and clear view of His glory vailed their faces in lowliest reverence in the presence of the infinitely wise God, have ever seen farthest into those principles that concern the social wellbeing of man, and have ever seen most clearly the just and beautiful relations of moral truths. That this insight has the most blessed effect on the spiritual renovation of the heart, we readily admit; but this, although of itself of unspeakable importance, is not all. The insight which a pious man has of God's moral perfections has a direct and powerful tendency to enlarge the intellect on all those questions which are of highest moment to man as a social and accountable creature. How can it be doubted, that, as all this kind of knowledge comes from God, he will reflect it best who lives nearest to Him, knows most of Him, and walks most closely with Him. Oh! how great and just would all the thoughts of a soul be, if that soul were in constant harmony with the God of infinite wisdom, truth, and love!

It is not denied that ungodly men may have an intellectual

moralism. All accountable creatures have this, and some wicked men have possessed it to a high degree. But, apart from the melancholy reflection, that their intellect, working on such a theme, is dishonoring to God, and in many ways hurtful to themselves and others; it cannot be doubted that their want of piety has fatally marred, and often neutralized for any good, this sort of intellectual labor. Indeed, if the intellect be severed from God, and the heart in opposition to Him, the mind can give forth nothing but mere corruscations of light, which rather bewilder than guide, and are sure to land us at last in some disastrous folly. Unsanctified genius lives on the edge of madness, and may drive the world mad. For what, in truth, is the highest intellectual power without piety, but a Satanic light, leading in the end to the darkness of the pit. Real piety, we repeat, is the believing knowledge of the true God. But the mind enriched with this, and the intellect cannot fail to be enlightened and strengthened for the noblest labors in all moral inquiries.

But those who have gone fully along with me thus far, may be inclined to demur when they hear me affirm, that *piety is scarcely a less important auxiliary to the study of physical science.* As all our bodily wants are supplied from matter, it is natural that matter and its laws should be studied with great diligence. But, in addition to the wish to obtain supplies from matter for bodily wants, the lovers of science, whether their field be chemistry, geology, astronomy, or some department of natural history, will aim chiefly at ascertaining the great laws of nature, in the innumerable beautiful connections which God has established between causes and effects. These speculations of intellect are very pleasing, and in many ways very profitable. Now, although it is true that some natural philosophers who were notorious for their impiety, have made contributions to physical science; yet, it will not be denied, by those competent to judge, that such men have rather been the expounders and appliers of principles, than the discoverers of great truths. This is an important distinction. Any navigator may now go to the West Indies, but it required a Columbus at first to discover the way. The mote of impiety in the mind's eye, in many ways, unfits it for making grand discoveries in nature. Infidels should rather ponder this than sneer at it, for whether they believe it or no, it is nevertheless true, that *the high priests* whom God admits within the vail of nature to see its hidden laws, are those who approach the Holy of Holies with clean hands and a pure heart.

Linnæus, one of the greatest of natural philosophers, appears

to have gone to his work every morning after devout prayer, and to have closed the labor of each discovery with a hymn of adoring praise to God. Nearly the same may be said of Davy, and others who have occupied the highest places as successful investigators of the laws of nature. With these wonderful men it was no poetical fiction, that nature with its star-fretted roof, and its floor inlaid with oceans, mountains, and plains, is a great temple, in which the heart was to give profound homage to God, while the intellect was employed in investigating His works. It is, indeed, deeply interesting to observe how these great men found in this temple, from its suns and stars down to its plants, insects, and pebbles, vast and beautiful thoughts of His wisdom, power, and goodness, who created and sustains the whole. We are struck with their enthusiasm in prosecuting their researches, but are apt to forget that the enthusiasm which enabled them to accomplish so much in unfolding the laws of nature, was but the form that their piety took in doing homage to the God of nature. It was indeed their ardent love and reverence for Him, that kindled and preserved alive that enthusiasm which no disappointment could quench and no labor wear out. If I may so speak, their piety furnished them with a kind of compass, telescope, and microscope, which enabled their intellect to go farther and to see farther and deeper into nature than it otherwise could have done.

But the truth of this is scarcely more apparent in the philosopher, who looks under the surface for the hidden laws of nature, than in the poet who looks mainly on the face of things. Let it not be doubted that the devout poet sees far more of beauty and grandeur in the objects around him than can be seen by the man of mere taste. Hence the most beautiful, sublime, and truest pictures given of nature, have been given by poets of a devotional turn of mind. No atheist can be a great poet. A full command of language, with the gift of a good ear, may enable him to write pretty and euphonious verses, but beyond this he cannot go. Not visible nature, but man, is the poet's great subject. But man, in the eyes of the atheist, has nothing grand or morally beautiful about him, for, according to his theory, "man is but an animal of more numerous and complex instincts than other animals." He cannot see either the awful depth or height to which the human soul may go. He cannot enter into its terrible fears, or its high and immortal hopes. The fact is, he does not understand the nature of man, and cannot therefore understand the end of his being. To the atheist—and I use the word in a

somewhat broad sense—man must appear little and essentially base, while his whole character and history must seem an inexplicable enigma. Hence, be his learning ever so extensive, let him not, as poet or moral metaphysician, write upon man. Not understanding man's relations to God, he does not understand sin, and of course is ignorant of the real cause of all our maladies, and of the means of recovery, as well as of the motives which can alone induce human beings to act wisely. The sceptic is but little aware that his denial of certain primary truths introduces confusion and weakness into all his speculations on man. Hence the world has seen nothing more absurd and contemptible, as intellectual efforts, than certain treatises which the writers of this school have put forth on human nature.

It must not be disguised that if a writer, from his impiety, is morally unfit for apprehending the higher forms of mental beauty, or of understanding the nature of love, and of feeling its influence in its purer and more elevated modes, he is incapable of writing either poetry or moral metaphysics of a high order. It is, indeed, utter folly for him to attempt any lofty theme in verse. This can only be done with success by the poet who touches the harp with a hand all tremulous with adoration, and whose soul is ravished with delight at the contemplation of what is loveable and morally excellent. The damage which impiety does to the heart is fatal to this condition of mind.

I can easily see certain objections which may be made to these views. They are, however, rather apparent than real. When poets of an atheistic turn of mind have been favorites with the public, it was not because of high originality, or great and beautiful views of truth, but because they either pandered to the depraved appetites and prurient tastes of the world, or with lively wit and great felicity of language, hit off certain peculiar phases of character. Even in their descriptions of nature or scenery, these writers are generally "flat, stale and unprofitable." This need not be wondered at: how can any one utter great and true things of nature, in whose eyes nature, in its innumerable forms and operations, is without design, end, or aim—a mere result of blind chance? When these writers speak in lofty and glowing terms of nature, their language is but the *cant of fancy*, not the sincere enthusiasm of an honest and warm heart. They praise nature, that they themselves may be highly praised for doing it so well. This is not even respectable idolatry, but the mere hypocrisy of vanity. The truth is that those who cannot see a Being of

infinite excellence, guiding, by His unerring wisdom, all the complicated movements of material, intellectual, and moral agents, can see but little that is great or beautiful in nature. But when the Universe is seen to give a reflected, though but feeble image of the Divine perfections, then do we see design, power, goodness, and wisdom in every object. He that would speak of nature, with the wisdom of a true philosopher, or feel and express its beauties with the soul of a true poet, must first of all look at it with the eye of a God-fearing man. He must be able to say—and to say it as much with the heart as with the understanding—God made it all. He made the starry hosts with the breath of His mouth. He leadeth forth Arcturus and his sons. He weigheth the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance, and giveth to the sea its appointed bounds. The winds are His servants, and the lightnings His messengers. And He clotheth the hills with grass, the valleys with corn, and Lebanon with its cedars. All creatures wait on Him, whether in the deep or on the dry land, and He giveth laws to them all, and openeth His hand and supplieth all their wants. In a word, all the departments of nature, and all the movements of Providence, are full of beauty, and pregnant with instructive lessons to him who sees a God of infinite excellence, sitting on the Throne of the Universe, from whom this wondrous order of things sprung, and whose hand sustains and directs the least as well as the greatest of its movements.

But, next—*Piety aids greatly in improving and directing the mind, as it furnishes the most efficient motives to a right course of action.*

A man will select his work, and do it well or ill, just according to the motives he has. If motives do not constitute mental strength, yet mental strength is nothing without them. If you know a man's motives, you have got the key of his will, and the measure of his efforts. Success or failure may depend on other causes, but be other resources what they may, if a man wants suitable motives, he will fail to accomplish the best ends. Motive is the steam power of the soul. Now it often happens that the end in view, of itself yields strong motives, but whether they are to be drawn wholly thence or found elsewhere, they must be possessed in order to efficient and fruitful effort. But it should be noticed, that motives to well-doing, differ not merely in quality, but also in degree of inherent force. It is a great folly to cast away the weaker motives; for these, if pure, have their beneficial influence. It is Religion, however, that yields all the higher, or, I may say, the highest motives. But then it only does so to those who exercise a living faith in its

great truths, or rather a constant faith in its Divine Author. Now piety, by bringing the soul into union with God, brings it at once under the influence of motives, which will rightly affect your minds in all the circumstances in which you can be placed; as these motives are ever pure, powerful, and lasting. Man requires motives which shall have all these qualities; and he who lives under their influence cannot but labor worthily. Thus it is, that the pious man ever feels himself encompassed with motives suitable to his nature, character, and prospects. In all the relations in which he stands to God, and in those in which God stands to him: in the benefits received, the blessings promised, or the threatenings announced, the pious man sees powerful motives to fidelity in duty, and patience under trials.

All commands to duty come from that God whom the pious revere and love as their Divine Lawgiver. But love to a Being of infinite excellence, and boundless beneficence, must be a supreme motive to well-doing. Indeed, love to God is the grand motive to all obedience. That obedience to the Divine Ruler should be made to rest on a principle so simple, and every way so beneficial, is striking evidence that God governs His creatures in infinite wisdom and goodness. Had motives springing from mere fear and self-interest, been made the leading incentives to obedience, they would have enfeebled and debased the mind, whereas love as the leading motive every way exalts it. For the more intensely this is felt as a motive, the greater is our enjoyment in duty; while under its leading influence, all the faculties acquire a wonderful purity and strength. To do God's bidding for what He is in Himself, and for what He is to His creatures, is a motive sufficient to awaken all holy minds to vigorous activity. It is, indeed, this which moves the minds of angels to obedience; and why should it not have great influence with good men on earth? Yea, is it not true, that redeemed men have more powerful motives for loving God, than even the highest angels? To some extent all pious souls must feel this love constraining them to do or bear whatever God requires.

But we also owe duties to our fellow-men; and here again love must be the motive. From love to God springs true love to our fellow-creatures. The greater principle here does not annihilate the less, but purifies and regulates it. He that loveth God loveth his brother also. And he who does so will strive to act worthily to others. But now, mark it, no man acting rightly towards God and worthily to his fellow-men, can act unworthily to himself. He may fail in accomplishing all that he

wishes, yet never is work done in love a total failure. Work done from Heavenly motives, yields a product that will last forever. But what work? I answer, any work to which God may call you. The future result of labor can be but imperfectly seen by the wisest. The teacher of an obscure school is engaged in labor, which many regard as exceedingly humble; yet, if it be ably and faithfully performed, his labor may yield precious fruits. Not to speak of the general and obvious good he may accomplish for all under his care; who can tell but in that obscure corner in which he is toiling, he may, by his wise and patient instruction, be instrumental in making early impressions on two or three minds that are afterwards to play a distinguished part in the affairs of the world, or become great lights in the Church. The teacher at his humble task cannot see this, nor is it needful he should; all that he requires to see, is the work to which God appoints him. In that little corner of the vineyard his task lies, and he does it diligently and contentedly, for he does it lovingly. He does not know what are to be the results of his labors; he only knows, and this is enough, that the God he loves bids him labor there; and with a heart of love for his fellow-creatures, he labors on. This is very beautiful, yet is nothing more than the beauty of true piety doing its work from love.

A vain and ambitious man can never find a place wide enough for his talents, or a task sufficiently worthy of his labor. This is a common and sad folly. And I cannot but remark, that he who will not labor zealously till advanced to a high place, will, from want of the preparation which faithful labor in a lower position gives, never be fitted for any weighty trust, or if unhappily raised to such, his failure will be certain and disastrous. Mere presumption, vanity, or the favor of friends, will never supply the energy and mental resources which are required for the performance of weighty duties. A man who is perpetually seeking a wide sphere, in order to labor faithfully, has reason to suspect his ability for the narrowest sphere of action. What we need are motives which will induce us to *labor faithfully* in the culture of our own minds, and toil faithfully in behalf of all interests intrusted to our care, be the post we occupy ever so low. It cannot but awaken your pity and disgust when you see a man who will not work, or be faithful in duty, because the place is not large enough to give scope to his very superior powers. Surely the one talent is *one too much for him;* yet for this God will hold him accountable. Beware of measuring your ability by your vanity.

But while I earnestly wish you should understand the prin-

ciples I am laying down, and ever feel the force of the highest motives, yet I am far from thinking that secondary motives may not produce beneficial results. Not only in the common pursuits of life, but also in the learned professions, secondary motives are every day found producing some good. Many persons distinguished in their profession, and in many ways useful, do not act from the highest and purest motives. It were foolish to suppose that unless a man acts from pure love to God, he cannot be a good lawyer, an efficient medical practitioner, or a successful merchant. The truth is, God brings good out of evil, and makes much that is beneficial to society to flow from agents whose motives are far from pure in His sight. An enlightened self-interest has nothing in it pleasing to God, or strictly virtuous; yet He may in the scheme of His providence bring much out of it which may be indirectly very useful to mankind. But this admitted, with the qualifications at which we have hinted, and still it cannot be denied that a selfish expediency, which virtually holds Divine principles in abeyance, and never acts from heavenly motives, is the horrible cancer that in our times is eating at the heart of all that is really great and good in our most sacred institutions. Let men gloss it as they may, the fact cannot be concealed, that a base expediency, whether it assumes the form of cunning and moral cowardice, or a recklessness of consequences, springs in all cases from mere selfishness. What is called an enlightened self-interest affords, indeed, but poor light for ourselves, and is the cause of fatal darkness to others. It may not be easy for men at all times to know their leading motives; yet, could these be discerned, it would be found that when statesmen trifle with the interests of their country; when judges are corrupt, lawyers dishonest, teachers inefficient, and clergymen unfaithful; there lies at the heart of the mischief a mass of base motives. God is not in all their thoughts. It is not God, but man, that they fear and seek to honor. Hence, the work which they do for man is in many ways miserably done. Oh yes, it may be true that the greater part of men are influenced solely by self-interest; but is it not also true that our world has had more than enough of its work done, or rather misdone, from this? Depend on it, all selfish expediency, as it rests on what is hollow, must in the end break down, and is sure to carry much down with it.

My young friends, heavenly principles can alone be a basis on which you can found with safety and honor. But these principles and pure motives go together. What a blessed change, did all that have the interests of others in their hands,

from menial servants up to Ministers of State, ever act from pure motives: care, diligence, and ability, would soon be witnessed in all the departments of life. But piety can alone furnish, in the full sense, such motives. And let it be deeply pondered, that he who is sufficiently animated by right motives will not fail to make the acquisitions necessary to fit him for his duty. His chief wish is not to obtain a *place*, but rather to be thoroughly prepared to discharge its duties. Be the toil, sacrifice, or self-denial, ever so great, such a man is determined that the duty he undertakes shall be faithfully done. He will labor to fit himself for his work, and will strive to do it well. It is not good to cherish bitter contempt for any human creature, yet who can, without loathing, think of the young man who is looking forward to some important vocation in life, constantly computing the least possible amount of preparation for it, and ever calculating how little labor will suffice to make a decent appearance in it. The world has been sorely cursed, and the highest interests of society shamelessly sacrificed, by such men. But, mark the man of high principles and pure motives: he feels himself the steward of God; emphatically, God's servant. He knows that to Him, rather than men, he has to account.

In no place are these truths of more vital moment than within the walls of a College. For, assuredly, the Student who has ever before him noble ends and pure motives, will be diligent, obedient, and every way circumspect. He feels, as a pious youth, that he is not his own, but God's; in the highest sense, God's child, as well as His accountable creature. Hence he feels that all his powers ought to be employed agreeably to the will of God, and for His glory. He rejoices that it is so; and, as a natural consequence from the love he cherishes to others, he seeks earnestly the gratification of the pure wishes and ardent hopes of those who have an interest in him: he toils because he loves others, and because he knows that from their love to him they will rejoice in his success. Oh! that you all had that piety which yields the best motives; then would there be such labor and demeanor here that our hopes would be realized, the fond wishes of parents gratified, and neither the world nor the church ever be disappointed in the students of this University.

But, farther—*Piety, as it sets the powers of the mind free from certain adverse influences, is so far favorable to intellectual labor.*

Man is not purely an intellectual creature: he has passions and appetites which have their roots mysteriously and deeply struck; partly into his corporeal constitution, and partly into

his mental. God arranged our compound nature; and when he beheld it at first, all was very good. But the whole nature of man is now deranged: all has gone into frightful confusion. This does not arise *from matter*, or from our nature being compound. Sin hath made the derangement. Had the mind of man remained in harmony with God, all his powers would have wrought harmoniously together, while he himself would have continued in harmony with all the Divine dispensations, and in beautiful union with all holy creatures. But as sin breaks up the union of the soul with God, so it destroys the harmony among our powers, and dissolves the peaceful relations betwixt us and other creatures. Sin is confusion. When a creature rebels against God, and breaks away from the centre of all order, he becomes anarchical; while his activities can only tend to destruction and misery. What we call death is but the separation of parts; and what we call spiritual death is but the separation of the soul from God. If sin be not assumed as a grand and terrible element in the question, all our inquiries into human nature will be confused, and all our conclusions fallacious. The same radical mental powers may be common to man and all holy creatures; but sin has produced such changes in man, that we must beware how we carry out analogies betwixt holy minds and ours, else we will be sure to fall into grievous errors. It is not to be questioned, that when man came from the hand of his God, his mind apprehended truth readily; his memory retained it accurately; his reason saw its nice relations; while the passions were moved by right motives, and the appetites were under the guidance of reason in ministering to the body. There was then perfect harmony among all the powers. But sin hath deranged all. Not to mention other causes of confusion, it is enough to say that the passions, under the influence of ill motives, have lost their original properties, have become malign, and work adversely to reason and happiness; while the appetites may be said to have entirely changed place with the higher powers: so that instead of being the obedient servants of reason for the use of the body, they have become the blind tyrants of the soul, enslaving and often utterly debasing it. This sad confusion of things must produce misery enough.

In order to establish these views, we do not need to depend on abstract reasoning. Alas! the world is full of terrible practical illustrations. Indeed, every man has, less or more, the sad experience of these truths in his own moral history; and no one can look abroad on society without seeing melancholy proofs of the confusion which sin has produced in the nature

of man. Every drunkard gives fearful proof of what human nature becomes when appetite dominates over the higher powers. But although this vice strikingly illustrates our principle, yet the same confusion and degradation follow when appetite, in any form, gains the mastery. God's order of things is then subverted: for man, a morally accountable creature, and made for moral government, then falls under certain physical influences quite unsuitable for his powers in seeking happiness, and such as never can enable him to answer the end of his being. Hence it follows, that under these influences he seeks his happiness in gratifications unsuitable to his nature and the end of his being; and, consequently, becomes degraded and miserable. It is worthy of deep consideration, that if man will not obey the moral law, he cannot beneficially keep any other law: he can only meet the penalties that lurk behind the other laws, but cannot obey them. When man places himself under a constitution of things purely physical, he has placed himself under a covenant of death. Fearful consideration this: for it is really in this view, if you go deep enough, that you find the true reason of the misery and helplessness of the victims of appetite.

But all irreligious men are not the victims of lawless appetite. There are *lusts of the mind* as well as of the flesh. In some the sensual propensities are feeble, while the reign of the malign passions is exceedingly powerful: yet it cannot be denied that all wicked men are under the influence of some evil passion or irregular appetite. If some are not enslaved by sensuality, they are in bondage to pride, envy, or malice. I stop not to inquire whether lawless appetites or malign passions are the more injurious to the moral and intellectual powers: it is enough to know that both are extremely hurtful. Nor is it seldom that both prevail in the same individual: but under either influence, a mind gifted far above the common will have its light quenched, its beauty sullied, and its strength wasted; for God has in justice ordained that those who indulge evil passions or lawless appetites shall check the growth of their intellectual faculties; and if the indulgence be carried far, the intellectual power that remains is only a power to produce mischief and work misery. Hence, men thus enslaved become fools in intellect, fiends in passion, but worse than beasts in appetite. This is the just doom of those who persist in violating the laws of a holy God.

But now for the means of prevention and cure:—*Will not prudence, drawing its lessons from experience and enlightened self-interest, do either or do both?*

That prudence and a calculating self-interest may do something to check passion and regulate appetite, as well as afford some help to those who have been enslaved by these influences, is cheerfully admitted. Yet all experience shows how feeble in most cases prudence and self-interest are as checks on passion and appetite; and how utterly inefficient they are as means of complete emancipation from the pernicious influence to which we refer, when it has acquired the force of habit. I would forbid no one to make use of all the lower motives, as auxiliary to the protection of his virtue and happiness; yet I would earnestly implore you to beware of trusting solely to these.

It is piety, depend on it, or, which is the same thing, the grace of God reigning in your heart, that will be found the true preventative from this unhallowed influence, and, I may add, the sovereign cure, if you ever unhappily fall under it. Yes, it is true—"pity it is that it should be true"—that the good and the wise may fall before temptation. But it is no less true, that by the grace of God alone they are enabled to arise and cry for pardon, and find spiritual health and purity of conscience. If your piety be strong, your means to resist these adverse influences will also be strong; and if at any time you are ensnared by them, your only means of escape will be found in the principles of a living piety. To these pernicious influences you may at any moment be exposed, and most exposed when you think there is really no danger. And oh! do not forget, that if you give way, you are laying your minds open to influences which will impair your mental strength, confuse your intellectual perceptions, and sorely damage all your moral sensibilities. If you would, then, my dear young friends, be accomplished scholars, and well-informed men; if you would preserve your thinking powers in their highest vigor; and, above all, if you would keep *a tender and healthy conscience*, ever present a determined and unbending resolution against the *slightest indulgence* in any malign passion or lawless appetite. Watch the beginning of the evil here, for you know not where the end may be, and your power to resist will decrease as the danger becomes perilous, and ruin is near; and that you may stand fast against the world, the devil, and the flesh, in the hour of temptation, and have a ready apprehension of truth, and a sound judgment to apply it, strive to keep your affections pure, and the mind free from all unhallowed imaginings. Keep appetite rigorously under the dominion of a sanctified reason; and often and earnestly pray to God to preserve you from those indulgences which darken the under-

standing, debauch conscience, harden the heart, blast usefulness, and ruin the soul.

But, in conclusion, I remark, that—*Piety will enable you to accomplish much intellectual labor under great discouragements.*

No man needs decision of character more than the mental laborer. The difficulties he has to surmount in acquiring knowledge, and the still greater difficulties he may have to encounter in applying it to others, make it specially needful that he should be a man of strong purpose and unbending resolution. Very wicked men, in striving to accomplish wicked ends, have often manifested unconquerable purpose. Evil passions inflamed by bad motives may give intense force to resolution. In this, indeed, lies the main strength of bad men for evil: yet this strength of wickedness is but the strength of madness; producing mere waste, and tending to final destruction. It never garners any fruit that is good. On the other hand, a character that has force from pure and holy motives, is a character at once beautiful and powerful. The work done by a man of this character carries in it intrinsic and lasting excellence. It is work done to benefit men. God owns it and conscience ever approves it. He that works with bad principles and motives may think he is removing or rather escaping certain present difficulties, yet in reality he is preparing for himself difficulties which he cannot remove. But every obstacle overcome by him who labors from right motives, is a victory gained which prepares the way for a final triumph. The strength of godliness is the only strength for the performance of work really profitable.

There is no wisdom in filling the foreground of life to the young with dark pictures. The perpetual contemplation of difficulties may so far enfeeble the mind as to create the very disappointment constantly anticipated. The bosom of the young should be kept full of ardent and rational hopes. Yet to tell the young scholar that there is neither difficulty in acquiring extensive learning, nor in applying it in professional life, were grossly to deceive him. The scholar's life is a battle, first with ignorance and perversity in himself; next with the ignorance and perversities in his fellow-men. He is, indeed, constantly at war with *some one or other of the powers of darkness;* and if he does battle faithfully for truth, he will often have to war with spiritual wickedness in high places. Nor can I forbear to remark, that if in your professional career you want courage to face difficulties, and firmness to bear disappointments, your superior refinement will only make you the more miserable, and your extensive acquirements but give to

your defeat a fouler dishonor. Firmness of character is indeed of unspeakable value; yet the firmness that wants piety is but *hardness*, often mulishness; while the courage that draws strength from bad motives is but mere recklessness.

But let me cherish the hope that I am addressing a set of young men who are determined that within these walls they shall learn *the art of mastering difficulties*, so that they may know how to meet and overcome them in the conflicts of life. The phrase, a poor scholar, has acquired in the annals of literature a terrible significancy; while the phrase, a poor student, has also had in the world a painful and deeply interesting meaning. I am not aware that I am addressing any one here, who can, in the rigorous sense, be said to know what real poverty is. Yet, why should it be concealed, that some of the finest specimens of moral heroism that the world has ever seen have been poor students. Instances have not been rare of poor lads often ill prepared for the higher tasks of the class-room; ill provided with pecuniary means and literary appliances for going through a College course; yet they entered on it with fixed resolution, and, never quailing before difficulties, at length bravely achieved the object on which their heart was set. Neither mean lodgings, poor fare, nor the biting sneers or pity of superiors, could break down their resolution to reach the goal of their wishes. Many Colleges can yet boast of such heroic young men: and what a noble youth is he who amidst all these difficulties, sits shivering by his midnight lamp, and labors with unfaltering determination to make himself a scholar, that he may be an efficient Minister of Christ. He who has thus borne the yoke in his youth, and has learned *this kind of hardness*, is so far prepared for being a good soldier of the cross. In the greatness of his aim, and purity of his motives, *lay his strength* for overcoming his difficulties.

Nor is it only when the highest end is in view, and poverty among the ills to be encountered, that the student requires heavenly motives to furnish the energy needful for the toils and difficulties commonly met with in the course on which he has entered. Although I think the Ministry the highest calling of man, yet there are other vocations, such as Law and Medicine, highly honorable and in many ways serviceable in the world. Hence, it is not alone in the ministry that men can manifest heavenly principles, and be influenced by pure motives. A young man with merely a secular profession in view, yet if animated by a desire for the glory of God, and anxious to fill a useful and honorable place in life, and at the same

time to better the condition and gladden the heart of some loving parent, has obviously such high aims and pure motives, that he will not be cowed by difficulties, or appalled by ordinary disappointments in the prosecution of his studies. But, gentlemen, be your aims in life what they may, you cannot dispense now with the all-efficient motives of religion. For rest in this, that no mere literary enthusiasm or worldly ambition, family pride or parental encouragement, will minister such succors to the student struggling under difficulties as he will find in the principles of piety, when these have taken fast hold of his understanding and conscience. When young men fail under difficulties in College, the failure oftener arises from a want of high principles to fall back on in the evil day than from a want of other resources.

No one can be required to overcome impossibilities; difficulties not impossibilities, are what labor and patience can overcome. Yet sloth or cowardice often mistakes the former for the latter. The mistake is every way mischievous, for in what is possible and rationally feasible, pious men should not be afraid of failure, or be perplexed in their work by the apprehension of defeat. They go to their work in God's name, engage in it for His glory, conscience approves what they do, and they can ever look to Heaven for a blessing. Yet such men will not pray that they may have no difficulties; their prayer will be for strength to overcome them. The old monks had a saying, that to labor is to pray. The sentiment needs correction; yet, assuredly, he who prays to be freed from all labor and difficulties, has a faith as questionable as his practice will be futile. Pray for strength, not only to overcome your difficulties, but pray that these very difficulties may be made subservient to an increase of moral and intellectual strength. I take leave to say, that he that flings up his task, when difficulties appear, will not labor well in this place, and will prove but a poor laborer in any place. Such men are ill qualified for the work that has to be done in a world of toils and confusion; and I must add, not well qualified, I fear, for doing work in any world. It should be broadly stated that the workmen that the church and the world need, are men who do not ask, when a noble task is to be done, what are its difficulties, but simply what are its duties. Such men look to God for His blessing, go earnestly to work, and leaving consequences with Him, they generally find that as their day is, so is their strength. And when the day closes, they find they have done work that will bear to be looked at.

I have thus, gentlemen, endeavored to illustrate the prin-

ciple, that a healthy piety is very helpful to intellectual labor. Let me however remind you, ere I close, that piety itself needs to be cultivated. No one requires to keep this in mind more than the hard student. It is no groundless surmise that long protracted and intense mental labor may wither the pious affections of the heart. Indeed there is reason to fear that some young men have left College at the close of a Session of severe application, with their minds stored with learning, but their hearts, to some extent, impoverished of pious emotions. The reason is plain: all their time and energies were entirely devoted to secular learning. Now, when this happens, sacred things lose their importance in the eyes of the student, and are pushed out of their due position. There is neither time nor suitable mental repose for cultivating the devotional feelings. Besides, and this needs to be weighed, if the mind be overwrought on what is purely intellectual, an unhealthy state of the conscience is almost sure to follow. Now the inference to be drawn from all this is, not that you shall labor less, but that you shall live nearer to God, and consecrate, more thoroughly, all your powers to His service. Let the *hard student* give to his devotional duties the time due to them, and let him go about them with composure of mind, and his mental thrift will then be safely attended to. And here I cannot but remind you of the necessity of making such a use of your Sabbath-day privileges, that they shall all have a sanctifying effect on your heart and life. The student who appropriates sacred time for literary labor, is doing little good for his intellect, and much harm to his conscience and heart. In a word, strive to increase in faith, love, meekness and humility, while you grow in knowledge, and then your knowledge will be true mental wealth. If this were done, the balance would be kept right amidst the opposing claims of different duties, and all the powers would work harmoniously for the best results. And never forget, that if the highest attainments in learning can of themselves but partially prepare you for the labors, trials, and temptations of the present life, they cannot prepare you at all for the duties and joys of the life to come. An immortal creature is but poorly educated who is not instructed for eternity.

No one, I think, can so far mistake the drift of this address as to suppose that I urge you to cultivate piety merely as a means to high intellectual acquirements. This were indeed to pluck the fruit from the tree of life that you might be as gods. Or, to use another figure: this were not so much to carry unhallowed fire to God's altar, but far worse, to attempt to steal fire thence, that you might burn incense to

your own vanity. No, my young friends, piety is not to be thus regarded as a means. It is itself an end; yea, the greatest of ends. Yet it is no paradox to say, that God has so marvellously arranged matters by what may be called the law of action and reaction, that piety, while it remains a grand end, may nevertheless become the blessed means to many subordidinate ends.

In fine, I take leave once more to repeat that we, your Professors, are determined, as heretofore, that no diligence or kindness shall be lacking on our part to do you all the justice in our power. And if we have the same satisfaction this Session as we had last, from the uncommon diligence and gentlemanly demeanor of our students, we shall at the close have much cause to rejoice in our labors.